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The Parents Matter! Program: Promotion of Parenting Skills to Prevent Youth HIV Infection

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Abstract Option 1

D20 Strengthening Families and Communities for HIV Prevention and Care

BACKGROUND: Parents are in a unique position to provide early and continuous HIV prevention messages to their children. Many parents, however, have difficulty communicating due to a lack of information, skills, comfort or confidence. A randomized clinical trial was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention designed to provide parents with information and skills to overcome these communication barriers.

METHODS: 1115 African-American families from a longitudinal, community based intervention trial were assigned to 1 of 3 intervention arms: *comprehensive skills building communication*- 5 sessions focusing on communication about sexuality education and sexual risk reduction; *brief skills building communication*- a single condensed session covering the same content as the comprehensive intervention; and *general health (control)* - a single session focusing on general health issues. Assessments occurred at pre-intervention, post-intervention, and six-month follow-up.

RESULTS: Generalized estimating equation modeling was used with appropriate controls. Findings indicated that the Comprehensive Intervention was effective in improving parents' report of parent-child communication about sexuality education and sexual risk reduction (both $p < .05$) at post and 6-month follow-up. Furthermore, both parent and child reports indicated that parents in the Comprehensive Intervention were more skilled, comfortable and confident during discussions with their children at post and 6-month follow-up ($p < .05$ for parent report and for child report). The Brief Intervention only resulted in changes in parent report of parent-child communication about sexuality education at post and 6-month follow-up ($p < .05$). The General Health Intervention demonstrated no changes.

CONCLUSIONS: The Comprehensive Intervention was effective at increasing skill, comfort and confidence to promote more optimal communication between parents and their children about HIV prevention.

